



Quality Payment Program Technical Assistance Transition

For over two years, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has successfully implemented the Quality Payment Program technical assistance initiative. As a part of our overall burden reduction efforts, and because we are planning to streamline and simplify the Merit-Based Incentive Payment System, we are now shifting our focus to those clinicians most in need of support.

In 2017, the CMS launched a comprehensive education and outreach effort to raise awareness and help clinicians successfully participate in the Quality Payment Program. One aspect of this campaign was to provide free technical assistance to clinicians eligible for the MIPS pathway of the Quality Payment Program regardless of practice size. MIPS eligible clinicians who are in large practices (16 eligible clinicians or more) received assistance from the Quality Innovation Networks – Quality Improvement Organizations (QIN-QIOs), while those in smaller practices (15 or fewer eligible clinicians) were supported through the Small, Underserved, and Rural Support initiative. Additionally, clinicians in any size practice could enroll in the Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative (TCPI) Practice Transformation Networks (PTNs), where they would receive MIPS-specific support and assistance in transitioning to an Alternative Payment Model (APM) or Advanced APM.

We were proud that in 2017 our free technical assistance received a 99.8 percent customer satisfaction rating from over 200,000 clinicians and practice managers. Furthermore, the technical assistance networks responded to 98.7 percent of initial referrals for additional support from the Quality Payment Program Service Center and CMS Regional offices within 1-business day. Overall, the technical assistance initiative along with support from professional associations, consumer advocates, and other stakeholders helped MIPS eligible clinicians successfully participate during the first year of the Quality Payment Program, resulting in a 95 percent participation rate.

We made a commitment to continue providing free technical assistance during the 2018 performance year and we fulfilled that pledge. During 2018, the technical assistance networks provided direct customized support to 94 percent of MIPS eligible clinicians who were required to participate at the individual level, while also maintaining a high standard of customer service. This resulted in a 98.7 percent customer satisfaction rating. We never lost sight of the importance of rapid response as the technical assistance networks addressed 98.1 percent of initial referrals within 1-business day. This helped clinicians spend less time navigating program requirements and more time with patients.

As we reflect on the successes of clinicians, especially those in large practices, we look to the future of the Quality Payment Program. Our goal is to make this a practical program for every

clinician, regardless of specialty or practice size. We envision continuing to move MIPS toward a more cohesive experience that reduces participation and reporting burden, while also simplifying the current program requirements. We believe it is important to transition our technical assistance offerings to reflect a more streamlined future state and deliver focused solutions to clinicians who are most in need. We will continue to provide free technical assistance to MIPS eligible clinicians in small practices via the Small, Underserved, and Rural Support initiative. We will also support their transition to APMs to the extent possible through TCPI (until the end of the model test). With the wide ranging goals covered under the forthcoming *Network of Quality Improvement and Innovation Contractors (NQIIC): QIN-QIO Focused Task Order Statement of Work*, the free technical assistance provided by the current QIN-QIOs for MIPS eligible clinicians in large practices will end on July 17, 2019.

For those currently receiving MIPS support from the QIN-QIOs, be assured that these organizations have committed to providing exceptional technical assistance through July 17th. Once this support officially ends, we will continue providing assistance through several other excellent resources.

The Quality Payment Program Service Center will serve as a primary point of contact to help address your questions and concerns. The Service Center is equipped to manage very basic questions as well as more complex practice scenarios. Moreover, we have shared valuable best practices and lessons learned from the QIN-QIOs with the Service Center to ensure that you receive seamless and consistent support. Connect with the Service Center at 1-866-288-8292 (TTY 1-877-715-6222) or via email at QPP@cms.hhs.gov. The CMS Regional Offices will continue to assist in connecting clinicians in all practice sizes to valuable program resources, such as the Service Center, educational resources, webinars, etc. The Regional Offices are a local presence and work closely with clinicians (as well as beneficiaries, stakeholders, and others) to provide education and address questions. Finally, the [Quality Payment Program website](#) will remain a centralized location for resources, information, features, and an unparalleled user experience. You can also subscribe to receive updates about new resources including free webinars, newsletters, and other updates on the website.

We are also calling on our partners and stakeholders to unleash innovation and develop a level of customer service similar to that established by our technical assistance networks. This is to help clinicians in large practices participate and succeed within MIPS. We deeply appreciate the efforts of associations, advocates, and other stakeholder groups in helping to engage their members and prepare them to meaningfully participate in MIPS, and we want to maintain that success. We will continue working with every clinician and stakeholder to identify resources, support, and program enhancements that will encourage meaningful participation, drive value, and, ultimately, help improve outcomes for patients.

The logo for the Quality Payment Program, featuring the text "Quality Payment PROGRAM" in white on a teal background.

Quality Payment PROGRAM

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